

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 02388 191154Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 INR-07
CIAE-00 PRS-01 PA-01 DHA-02 IO-13 NSC-05 /079 W
-----113295 191226Z /40

R 191106Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4891
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2388

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM, SU
SUBJECT: DOMESTIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A. KHARTOUM 2374 AND PREVIOUS B. ABU DHABI 2104 (NOTAL)

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. AS EXPECTED (REFTEL) IN HIS TELEVISION ADDRESS TO NATION
EVENING JULY 18, NIMEIRI ANNOUNCED THAT HE MET IN PORT
SUDAN WITH SADIQ AL-MAHDI AND THAT HUNDREDS OF PRISONERS AND
DETAINEES HAVE BEEN RELEASED. NIMEIRI MENTIONED MOVES IN
CONTEXT HIS PLEDGE MADE LAST MAY AT TIME HIS INAUGURATION
TO MAKE NATIONAL UNITY TOP PRIORITY. HE INDICATED HE IS NOT
RPT NOT MOVING ACCORING TO SET PLAN, BUT HE HAS BEEN IN
TOUCH WITH OPPOSITION BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SUDAN.
MOREOVER, NIMEIRI SAID ADDITIONAL MEETINGS WILL TAKE PLACE
SSON WITH OPPOSITION REPRESENTATIVES IN ATHENS, TRIPOLI,
LONDON, PARIS AND JIDDA. RE MEETING WITH SADIQ, NIMEIRI
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SAID HE DOES NOT WISH TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS AND HE EMPHASIZED
THAT MEETING TOOK PLACE WITHOUT 'SQUANDERING" ANY
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MAY REVOLUTION. END UNCLASSIFIED

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2. COMMENT: NOW THAT NIMEIRI'S MOVES TO ACHIEVE

RAPPROCHEMENT WITH SADIQ AL-MAHDI HAVE BEEN MADE PUBLIC, THIS HAS BECOME PRINCIPAL SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION AMONG INFORMED SUDANESE AND OTHERS IN KHARTOUM. THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF RUMORS FLOATING AROUND TOWN. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD US SUDANESE SOCIALIST UNION SECRETARY GENERAL ABUL GASSIM IBRAHIM HAS SET UP HIS FAMILY IN ALEXANDRIA, THEREBY SUGGESTING THAT IF SADIQ RETURNS ABUL GASSIM WILL LEAVE. ON OTHER HAND, ONE MIDDLE LEVEL SUDANGOV OFFICIAL TOLD DCM THAT, ALTHOUGH PUBLIC WELCOMES DEVELOPMENTS, THERE IS NO WISH TO SEE SADIQ TAKE IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSITION. IN ADDITION TO SUDANGOV-ANSAR POLITICS, THERE ALSO SPECULATION OVER REACTION OTHER RELIGIOUS/POLITICAL GROUPS, SUCH AS KHATMIA, IF SADIQ REGAINS ANY POWER IN SUDAN. IN SHORT, DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IS SOMEWHAT CONFUSED AND NIMEIRI'S REMARKS INDICATE PROCESS OF ACCOMMODATION WILL CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME. ALTHOUGH THERE SOME CONCERN OVER IMPLICATIONS OF BRINGING SADIQ BACK INTO THE FOLD OF LEGITIMACY, THERE SEEMS TO BE WIDESPREAD SATISFACTION OVER NIMEIRI'S MOVE. PUBLIC SEEMS EAGER TO PUT BEHIND IT SEVERE INTERNAL POLITICAL STRAINS THAT HAVE EXISTED PARTICULARLY SINCE LAST JULY. THERE ALSO SOME FEELING THAT, IF NIMEIRI CAN NEUTRALIZE OPPOSITION LED BY SADIQ AL-MAHDI, HE WILL ALSO REDUCE FOREIGN THREAT SINCE SADIQ WILL NO LONGER BE AVAILABLE TO LIBYANS AND OTHERS AS ANTI-NIMEIRI AGENT. BERGUS

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